

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T NICOSIA 1663

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PGH SEVEN)

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS : PINT PFOR CY

SUBJECT: CLERIDES' SUCCESSION

1. I RECOMMEND DEPT CONSIDER MOVING VERY QUICKLY TO
RECOGNITION OF CLERIDES GOVERNMENT.

2. I BELIEVE THAT AT APPROPRIATE EARLY OCCASION USG SHOULD
ALSO INDICATE EXPECTATION THAT APPROPRIATE CONSTITUTIONAL
PROCESSES WILL BE FOLLOWED FOR HOLDING OF ELECTIONS.
(CONSTITUTION SPECIFIES 45 DAYS IN PARA 4 ART. 44.) WE
MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER ENDORSING UN AUSPICES FOR
HOLDING OF ELECTIONS IN VIEW OF RECENT TURBULENT HISTORY
OF ISLAND.

3. MY REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING EARLY ACTION ARE THESE:

(A) HE IS IDEAL PRESIDENT FROM OUL STANDPOINT,

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BECAUSE OF MODERATE POLITICAL ORIENTATION, PROSPECT OF

ATTRACTING WIDEST SPECTRUM OF VOTES, AND BECAUSE HE IS ONLY GREEK CYPRIOT LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE SUCCESSFUL ARRANGEMENTS WITH TURKS. HIS VIEWS ON ENOSIS ARE VERY MODERATE, AND FOR THIS REASON SOVIET BLOC MAY FIND HIM LESS OBJECTIONABLE THAN ANY OTHER CANDIDATE WHO WOULD HAVE ANY HOPE OF ACCEPTANCE BY NATIONAL GUARD.

(B) SWIFT MOVE BY USG MIGHT HAVE EFFECT OF DEVELOPING INTERNATIONAL MOMENTUM FOR RECOGNITION, AT LEAST AMONG WESTERN COUNTRIES, THUS AVOIDING QUAGMIRE OF MAKARIOS VS. CLERIDES ARGUMENTATION.

(C) HE IS CONSTITUTIONAL SUCCESSOR, AND CONSTITUTION IS SUFFICIENTLY BROAD TO MAKE REASONABLE CASE THAT MAKARIOS UNABLE TO PERFORM AND THAT IN FACT "SUCCESSION" QUESTION DOES ARISE.

4. I BELIEVE THAT GESTURE TOWARD ELECTIONS IS DESIRABLE IN ORDER TO HELP HEAD OFF AN INTERNATIONAL STANDOFF BETWEEN WESTERN COUNTRIES RECOGNIZING CLERIDES AND SOVIET BLOC PLUS NONALIGNED SUPPORT FOR MAKARIOS, STANDOFF WHICH WOULD BE REFLECTED IN INTRA-CYPRIOT SCHISM WITH RESULTANT INSTABILITY. WITH PROSPECT OF ELECTION, NONALIGNED AND LEFTISH MIGHT BE LESS UNITED AGAINST CLERIDES THAN WOULD BE CASE IF IT WERE STRAIGHT FIGHT AS TO WHO IN FACT IS PRESIDENT. AS ABOVE, CLERIDES MIGHT NOT BE ALL THAT OBJECTIONABLE TO SOVIETS BECAUSE HE AT LEAST PROMISES ASSURANCE AGAINST ENOSIS.

5. WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT FOR GREECE TO MAKE CLEAR THAT "MOTHERLAND" ENDORSES CLERIDES, AND FOR ANKARA TO CONVEY--NON APPROBATION, WHICH COULD BE KISS OF DEATH--BUT RATHER CLEAR SIGNAL THAT CLERIDES OFFERED BEST PROSPECT OF AVOIDANCE OF WAR.

6. WE ARE FRANKLY NOT CERTAIN THAT CLERIDES WOULD WIN AN ELECTION AGAINST ARCHBISHOP, BUT HIS CHANCES ARE BETTER THAN EVER FOR SEVERAL REASONS. ARCHBISHOP'S CONFRONTATION WITH ATHENS COST HIM DEARLY AMONG GREEK CYPRIOTS WHO PLACE HIGH VALUE ON SENSE OF UNITY WITH MOTHERLAND. FEAR OF WAR IF MAKARIOS RETURNS AND/OR OF REVERSION TO CIVIL STRIFE, LIKELY TO GIVE CLERIDES VOTE OF THOSE WHO ABOVE ALL WANT TRANQUILLITY. THIS COULD CUT INTO AKEL VOTE.

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7. WE COULD TAKE SOME RISK OF BEING WRONG. IN FINAL ANALYSIS, CLERIDES' PRESIDENCY DURING NEXT CRITICAL WEEKS IS BEST HOPE OF MAKING REAL SOLUTION WHICH WILL HEAD OFF GRECO-TURKISH WAR. THIS ALONE ACHIEVES OUR KEY PURPOSE IN FINAL ANALYSIS, WE WOULD LIVE WITH EVENTUAL MAKARIOS RETURN OF THAT PURPOSE ACHIEVED.

8. PRINCIPAL CHUT OF PRECIPITATE RECOGNITION OF COURSE
IS LIKELIHOOD THAT RELATIONS WITH ARCHBISHOP WOULD BE
MUCH WORSE IF HE DID SOMEHOW RETURN. WE THINK HE WOULD
NEED US, HOWEVER, AND WOULD AVOID REAL RUPTURE. WE ALSO
HAVE STRONG ARGUMENT THAT BY RECOGNIZING CLERIDES AND
ADVOCATING ELECTIONS WERE IN FACT ADVOCATING CONSITUTION-
ALITY AND GIVING MAKARIOS FAIR CHANCE.
DAVIES

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